



2022 SAMHSA SOAR JANUARY E-NEWS

New Year, New Look at SOAR Resources!

As we enter into 2022 and a new calendar year, we want to remind you of some great resources released over the past year!

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center created and/or revised its [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) resources](#) over the past year. These resources provide tools and action steps for SOAR providers to increase equity in SOAR service delivery and guide supervisors on supporting providers in these efforts. Check your locally saved copies and make sure you are using the updated [MSR Interview Guide and Template](#), [Identifying SOAR Applicants tool](#), and [Hiring and Supervising SOAR Case Workers toolkit](#).

We recently translated some key SOAR documents and tools into [Spanish](#) and released an issue brief, [SOAR Enhances Income Stability in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities](#).

Finally, we have updated our [SOAR Funding and Sustainability Overview](#) to help communities think through potential funding opportunities, including federal and state governments, foundations, and other private sources.



Honoring the Work of Jon Katherine Martins

Honoring the Work of Jon Katherine Martins From Emma Norton in Minnesota

The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is honored to recognize the tireless advocacy work of Jon Katherine Martins. Jon Katherine will be retiring from Emma Norton at the end of January 2022. Since 2014, she has been helping transform the lives of individuals and families in Saint Paul, Minnesota, through her daily work to support individuals with the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) application process using the SOAR model. Jon Katherine's SOAR work has led people to achieve housing stability; accessing needed medical, mental health, and substance use services; and obtaining health insurance, employment services, and educational opportunities. Jon Katherine's work proves that SOAR is about more than just income. Jon Katherine truly embodies the SOAR values of respect, choice, recovery is possible, hope, the use of person-first language, the celebration of diversity, and the abolishment of prejudice and discrimination. During the Metro-Area SOAR Provider Group meetings, she started each meeting by reading these values to remind the group that SOAR is about people, not forms.

Jon Katherine put years of work into developing the SOAR program at Emma Norton, which became a successful example at a local, state, and national level. Jon Katherine was always generous in sharing her experience and expertise to help support the growth of others using SOAR in their work (read a blog of hers on [completing SOAR-assisted applications during COVID-19](#)). She was a dedicated and extremely knowledgeable SOAR provider and a strong SOAR Local Lead. Jon Katherine led the Metro Area SOAR Provider Group for Twin Cities SOAR

providers. She presented on a national SOAR webinar, sharing how to use a trauma-informed approach in SOAR engagement with families. When compiling a list of partners and providers she worked with over the years, Jon Katherine discovered she had worked with nearly 100 different organizations and agencies.

In addition to the care and compassion she showed the individuals and families she assisted, Jon Katherine also paid close attention to showing her fellow SOAR providers the same care, compassion, and support. She stressed the need for self-care and practicing it concurrently with SOAR work. The positive impact Jon Katherine has had on the individuals and families she has helped, and the SOAR community at large, will not be forgotten. Thank you, Jon Katherine!

See How SOAR Works



NEW Webinar! Peer Support Specialists: A Critical Component for SOAR Programs

Tuesday, January 25, 2022, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET

From outreach case managers to SOAR State Team Leads, Peer Support Specialists have been providing critical services to their SOAR programs by using their professional experience and lived expertise to connect with SOAR applicants since we began in 2005. The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center recognizes the value of lived expertise in the benefits acquisition process and in leadership roles. In this webinar, panelists will share best practice examples on how they have incorporated their lived expertise into SOAR work. You will learn more about “Peer Support Services” as an evidence-based model of care and how this model has been shown to be highly effective within SOAR initiatives throughout the country.

[Register for the Webinar](#)

[SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call](#)

January 18, 2022, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET [Today!]

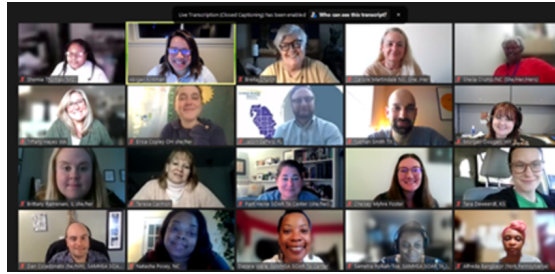
[Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar](#)

Community Spotlight: Connecticut Funding Success

Recently, the state of Connecticut has seen strong growth of the SOAR initiative by using SAMHSA COVID Block Grants to hire dedicated SOAR caseworkers! The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), which houses the SOAR State Team Lead, has an ongoing campaign to address resources gaps—SOAR was identified as one of these gaps. In response, the state allocated a portion of the block grants to hire seven dedicated SOAR specialists housed at agencies across the state! These newly dedicated positions join the three existing DMHAS-funded SOAR-dedicated positions to form the base of a strong, statewide SOAR initiative. These new SOAR caseworkers also work collaboratively with existing PATH providers and are housed within one of the eight Coordinated Access



Networks, ensuring that identified applicants have equal access to support across the state. We congratulate the state of Connecticut and your continued dedication to SOAR!



Meet Your New Local Leads

From November 30 to December 2, 2021, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center facilitated a virtual SOAR Leadership Academy. There were 21 participants representing 19 states (AK, CO, FL, IL, IN, KS, MD, MS, MO, MT, NV, NY, NC, OH, PA, TX, WA, WI, and WY) and Washington, DC. The new Local Leads expressed their excitement to put their strengths to use to bolster SOAR in their communities. Some of these strengths include:

- Completing SOAR applications
- Training and facilitation experience
- Serving as a lead for a SOAR Steering Committee
- Building community connections
- Conducting outreach
- Working with adult and child applicants
- Connecting people with resources
- Being a lifelong community member
- Being invested in their community
- Creating strong community collaboration
- Knowing trauma-informed practices

Interested in Becoming A SOAR Local Lead?

Application Tip! Working with Social Security Administration Forms

Submitting a complete SOAR application includes using a combination of online and paper forms. [The process](#) is complex, but absolutely worth it when the applicant receives their approval! The [Application Toolbox](#) on the SOARWorks website has a wealth of information to guide you through the SOAR application process, including all the essential [Social Security Administration \(SSA\) forms](#). Please do not hesitate to reach out to your [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center liaison](#) if you have any questions about the process!

SSA Updates

Information for Assisting Clients With SSI Claim Denials

SSA published a new Emergency Message (EM), [Instructions for Reopening and Reevaluating SSI Claims Denied due to COVID-19 Disaster Assistance](#). According to the EM, SSA is now reopening hundreds of thousands of applications for SSI benefits that they previously denied from March 2020 to the present, as those decisions may have been erroneous. Advocates assisting clients with denials can take proactive steps to identify potential cases and contact SSA to request a review.

SSA Update on Reentry Plans

The proposed reentry (SSA employees returning to local Social Security offices) date of January 3, 2022, has been postponed until further notice. SSA advises all inquiries to be directed online at [SSA.gov](#), or by calling the National 800 Number (1-800-772-1213) or a local Social Security office. SSA can only provide in-person services by appointment for limited, critical issues. SSA continues to hold voluntary hearings by online video and phone.

SOAR Jobs



- **SAMHSA SOAR TA Center:** [Policy Research Associates, Inc.](#) is seeking a full-time [Project Assistant](#) for the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#). The Project Assistant will function as an integral part of the SOAR team, providing administrative and logistical support to project staff.
- **Colorado:** Bayaud Enterprises is seeking a full-time benefits navigator to provide SOAR-associated services in Denver, Colorado.
- **Illinois:** Trilogy Behavioral Healthcare is seeking a full-time SOAR specialist to provide client-centered, strengths-based, and trauma-informed services to clients in Chicago, Illinois.
- **Nebraska:** Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska is seeking a full-time SOAR case manager to assist individuals in applying for Social Security disability benefits in Gering, Nebraska.
- **Texas:** IntegralCare is seeking a full-time SOAR specialist based in Austin, Texas.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#)!

More from SOAR



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Disclaimer: The SAMHSA SOAR Technical Assistance Center is sending this eNews with support from SAMHSA, HHS. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of HHS or SAMHSA.

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

SAMHSA 5600 Fishers Ln
Rockville, MD | 20857 US

This email was sent to hdavis@prainc.com.

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.